

Welcome to the Legislative Update for January 14, 2010

This e-mail is provided as a courtesy of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging. The purpose of this service is to keep Arizona's seniors and advocates for aging services informed about bills and actions taking place at the Arizona State Legislature and to highlight Congressional bills or happenings affecting older Americans. This information is intended to help you shape your own opinion about an issue and to give you the necessary resources and contacts so that you can ensure your perspective and voice are heard. It is our intent to offer this e-newsletter weekly during the 49th Legislature 2nd Regular Session. *The Legislative Update is non-partisan in nature.* Thank you for your interest!

GENERAL OVERVIEW:

Monday, January 11th marked the start of the 2nd Regular Session of the 49th Legislature. As part of the opening, the Governor delivered her State of the State Address.

To access the address, go to:

http://www.azgovernor.gov/dms/upload/SOTS_011110_SOTS2010.pdf

2010 Budget Update:

The December issue of the JLBC *Monthly Fiscal Highlights* indicates year-to-date revenues are (17.6%) below 2008 and \$(459.5) million below the budget forecast.

To view the December issues, go to: <http://www.azleg.gov/jlbc/mfh-dec-09.pdf>

The Governor is expected to provide her budget plan tomorrow, Friday, January 15th.

You can check the Governor's website for that information at:

<http://www.governor.state.az.us/>

Last week, the Speaker of the House announced the Arizona Economic and Job Recovery Bill; a fact sheet outlining provisions of the bill can be found at:

<http://www.azhouserepublicans.com/grow-arizona/files/Arizona%20Economic%20&%20Job%20Recovery%20Bill%20Fact%20Sheet%20%201-5-10.pdf>

STATE LEGISLATION:

At the end of the first four days of the 2010 Arizona Legislative Session, more than 647 bills have been posted. Several of these will be of interest to Arizona seniors and will be tracked by the Council and appear on the Legislative Update web page.

Please be advised that the presence of a bill on the Council's tracking list does not represent support or opposition by the Council to that bill. It *does* mean that the bill topic is something that is likely to be of interest to or have an impact on Arizona seniors so the Council is tracking the bill's progress.

Of special note: As part of the sunset review process for the Governors Advisory Council on Aging, one bill that the Council fully *supports* is **HB 2026** which extends the statutory life of the Council by 10 years to July 1, 2020.

At this time, both the House and the Senate are adjourned until Tuesday, January 19, 2010.

FULL LIST:

<http://www.azcapitolreports.com/webreport.cfm?webreport=24505&listid=40701&print=true> _

Note: The FULL LIST website link above provides you with the current status and upcoming hearing information about the bills being tracked by the Council and is available and updated on an ongoing basis, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. ***This list will be expanded as we have an opportunity to get through all of the bills, and we will add new bills to the list on a regular basis until all bills have been posted.*** Information about bill status, hearing, etc. is a purchased service provided by the *Arizona Capitol Times*.

If you have a particular perspective to share, you can voice your thoughts to:

The **Governor's Office of Constituent Services** at 602-542-4331 or toll-free at 800-253-0883

Or you may **contact the Legislator from your area**. You can locate your legislator by going to the **Arizona State Legislature website** <http://www.azleg.gov/> and looking for: *How do I find My Legislators* **or** by following the instructions provided at both the **Senate** and **House Member** links at the website.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION:

**S.1821
Elder Abuse Victims Act of 2009**

The bill is intended to protect seniors in the United States from elder abuse by establishing specialized elder abuse prosecution and research programs and activities to aid victims of elder abuse, to provide training to prosecutors and other law enforcement related to elder abuse prevention and protection, to establish programs that provide for emergency crisis response teams to combat elder abuse, and for other purposes.

S.1821 was introduced on 10/21/2009 by Senator Herb Kohl (WI).

The bill directs the Attorney General to:

(1) study state laws and practices relating to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation and report to Congress on such study;

(2) develop a long-term plan for elder justice programs and activities;

(3) award grants to support and train state and local prosecutors, courts, and law enforcement personnel handling elder justice-related matters; and

(4) establish the Elder Serve Victim grant program to facilitate and coordinate programs to provide emergency services to victims of elder abuse.

On 10/21/2009, S.1821 was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 4193

Title: To require the establishment of a Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers to compute cost-of-living increases for Social Security benefits under title II of the Social Security Act and to provide, in the case of elderly beneficiaries under such title, for an annual cost-of-living increase which is not less than 3 percent.

The bill was introduced on 12/3/2009 by Representative Eliot L. Engle (NY-17).

H.R. 4193 provides guaranteed 3% COLA for Seniors Act of 2009 - directs the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor to prepare and publish a monthly Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers that indicates changes over time in expenditures for consumption which are typical for individuals in the United States who are age 62 or older.

Amends title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) (OASDI) of the Social Security Act to:

(1) require the use of such index to compute cost-of-living increases for Social Security benefits; and

(2) provide, in the case of individuals who have attained age 62, for an annual cost-of-living increase of at least 3%.

On 1/4/2010, H.R. 4193 was referred to the Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions.

If you want more information specific to these or any bills, go to the **Thomas** website <http://thomas.loc.gov/> and enter the bill number under *Search Bill Summary & Status*.

Contact Your Congressional Member: If you are interested in Congressional bills or wish to share your thoughts or concerns, find out how to contact your congressional representatives by visiting: <http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House or <http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the Senate.

Other News:

From the Administration on Aging (AoA) - HHS Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee launched a new Web site for the National Legal Resource Center (NLRC). The NLRC was created by AoA to help legal and aging services advocates with resources needed to provide high quality legal assistance to seniors facing threats to their ability to live independently in their homes and communities. To access the site, go to: <http://www.nlrc.aoa.gov/>

A Profile of Older Americans: 2009 can be found at:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Aging_Statistics/Profile/2009/docs/2009profile_508.pdf

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has updated information on the Nursing Home Compare website to help individuals, family members, caregivers, and the public find and compare the quality of nursing homes more easily. A link to the fact sheet is provided here:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CertificationandCompliance/Downloads/consumerfactsheet.pdf>

Social Security offers an online retirement application; for more information go to:

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/planners/about.htm>

If you would like to submit an educational or public service event for consideration, you can do so by sending an email with the description to: gaca@az.gov. Please note: we try to include events of interest to older Arizonans and aging service advocates.

Thank you and have a good weekend!

~Governor's Advisory Council on Aging